

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. §1.111
Application No.10/501,886
Attorney Docket No. 042599

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached replacement sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 5 and 6. The amended drawings include the designation "Prior Art."

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended herein. Support for the amendment is set forth below.

Applicants' Response to the Objections to Drawings

Figures 5 and 6 stand objected to for not being designated as prior art. In response thereto, applicants have amended the drawings to include the designation. Wherefore, applicants respectfully request that the objection be withdrawn.

Applicants' Response to the Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by **Erickson** (4,278,399). Further, claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by **Kim et al.** (6,685,433). In response thereto, applicants have amended claim 1 to more distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Specifically, applicants have defined the step portion in terms of performing the function of forming a gap between adjacent main plates. The step portion serves as a means for forming a gap between adjacent main plates. Applicants respectfully submit that neither **Erickson** nor **Kim** disclose this limitation.

Erickson discloses a main plate 31 wherein a groove for apparently fitting a separator is formed. The rotor 31 also discloses a central hub 31a which extends perpendicularly from the plane of the main disk. As illustrated in figure 2 of **Erickson**, the central hub is formed integrally with the rotor (main plate) 31. The integrally formed central hubs of multiple rotors 31

would contact each other prior to the grooves formed along side the hubs. Therefore, the apparent step portion of **Erickson** would not form a gap when the rotors 31 would be stacked.

Similarly, in **Kim**, the disclosure which the Office Action cites to illustrates an integrally formed hub extending perpendicular from the main plate 201. See Fig. 5. Therefore, as above, the hubs would contact prior to the grooves if the main plates were stacked.

Contrary, pursuant to amended claim 1, there are no hubs integrally formed with the main plate 10. Rather distance pieces 46 are disposed between proceeding and subsequent stages of the impellers 1. See page 5, lines 24-26. Hence, the main plate 10 of the current invention may readily be stacked for processing by a welding machine.

Applicants respectfully submit that the groove of **Erickson** and step of **Kim** could not fulfil the limitation of amended claim 1 requiring means for forming a gap between adjacent main plates because of the presence of the hubs as discussed above. Wherefore, in light of the amendment favourable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 3 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated **Deters** (3,265,001). In response thereto, applicants have amended claim 3 to include the limitations of claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that **Deters** does not teach the limitations of claim 1 as discussed above. Wherefore, in light of the amendment favourable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

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Applicants' Response to the Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 2 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Erickerson**. The claims depend from claim1. Applicants respectfully submit that by addressing the rejection of claim 1 as set forth above, the rejection of claims is also addressed by nature of their dependency.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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